



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

New smart parking meters for the City of Charlotte

Q: Why is the City of Charlotte installing new parking meters?

A: Parking technology has increased significantly in the last decade rendering our current coin-only single-spaced meters, which were purchased 17 years ago, somewhat outdated. Currently, the on street parking staff often learns of a malfunctioning meter after a citizen reports it or during scheduled preventative maintenance. The new smart meters are capable of immediately alerting staff of a malfunction. They use solar cells to keep the batteries charged, resulting in fewer batteries to change and dispose.

The new meters will also improve customer service. Whereas the current meters are limited to accepting coins, the new meters will be able to accept credit cards. To see a demonstration of how a smart meter operates, visit CDOT's [Parking Meter](#) webpage.

Q: What is a "Smart Meter"?

A: The new parking meters the City of Charlotte will be installing are called "smart meters" because they use wireless technology to send and receive payment activity information and provide operational status information automatically – unique features that traditional coin-only meters do not have. Smart meters are built for the future and are capable of integrating with third-party technologies such as mobile payments and parking guidance applications which will ensure our technology is relevant for years to come. Technology moves fast, so we made sure to install meters that are prepared not only for technologies that are available today – but those that are yet to come.

Q: How many smart meters will be installed, and where will they be located?

A: Approximately 600 IPS smart meters will be deployed in high usage short-term parking spaces in downtown Charlotte, Elizabeth, and on South Boulevard and Park Avenue. Installation is scheduled to begin February 2015.

Q: When I use the credit card capability, is my information secure?

A: The new meter's credit authorization process meets the highest Visa and MasterCard standards for credit card information security (Level 1 PCI Certification). No credit card information is stored on the meter or on any City information system. For more information, visit [IPS PCI Certifications](#).

Q: Can I use any type of credit / debit card in the new meters?

A: The new meters will accept Visa and MasterCard credit / debit cards only.

Q: Is there a fee for using a credit card with the smart meters?

A: No, the City of Charlotte's on street parking program provides this payment method free of charge to the community. However, the minimum parking session when paying by credit card is one hour.



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Q: Will the new meters accept coins?

A: Yes, in addition to credit / debit cards, the new meters accept nickels, dimes, quarters and dollar coins. The new meters will also accept the Charlotte tokens.

Q: Will the parking rates, times and enforcement remain the same?

A: Yes, the on-street parking rate is still \$1.00 per hour and enforcement hours are still Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Some streets have rush hour parking restrictions from 7-9 a.m. and/or 4-6 p.m.

Q: How will the City pay for the new meters? Will this money be paid out of the general fund?

A: On- street parking revenues fund the program and all expenses. We expect the meters will pay for themselves with the additional revenue generated by making it easier to pay for parking. Fewer people will risk a ticket if they have options to pay for adequate time. The on street parking staff is continually researching new technologies that will ensure accountability, customer service and transparency.